



**CONTRA COSTA
WATER DISTRICT**

1331 Concord Avenue
P.O. Box H2O
Concord, CA 94524
(925) 688-8000 FAX (925) 688-8122

Copies sent to: PW file
Date: 11/22

November 16, 1999

Directors

Joseph L. Campbell
President

James Pretti
Vice President

Elizabeth R. Anello
Bette Boatman
Noble O. Elcenko, D.C.

Walter J. Bishop
General Manager

The Honorable Patricia Beneke
Assistant Secretary - Water and Science
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Mary Nichols
Secretary of Resources
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Contra Costa Water District's Interests in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program

Dear Assistant Secretary Beneke and Secretary Nichols:

The Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) serves over 400,000 people as well as 10 major industries, 36 smaller industries and businesses, and 50 agricultural users throughout north-central and east Contra Costa County. CCWD has been one of the most active and supportive participants in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program since its inception in 1994, providing written and verbal comments to CALFED reflecting CCWD's strong interests in protecting the Bay-Delta and all its beneficial uses. Those interests include protection and enhancement of the Bay-Delta ecosystem, and protection and improvement of water quality in the Delta to allow for municipal and industrial uses.

CCWD is an active member of the CALFED Water Management Development Team (WMDT) and is particularly concerned with CALFED's failure to incorporate adequate water quality actions as part of the WMDT. Water quality must be an equal part of the "three-legged stool". CALFED actions in Stage 1 (the first 7-10 years) and beyond, and the choices regarding operation and construction of facilities and actions, must be designed to benefit not only the ecosystem, fisheries and water supply but also to result in continuous improvement in water quality. Indeed, many proposed actions will result in water quality degradation.

A detailed list of water quality actions that CCWD requests be incorporated into CALFED's water management programs is described in Attachment A. These include increasing Delta outflow in the fall when salinity concentrations in the Central and South Delta are typically highest and when actions to make-up water supply for export water users are most likely to degrade Delta water quality.

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Water exchanges that blend high quality Sierra supplies with Delta water and selective Delta pumping schedules can also be used to improve the quality of drinking water for users of Delta water as part of a comprehensive water quality package. However, these actions alone may not meet CALFED's water quality goals unless new storage is included as part of the CALFED preferred alternative.

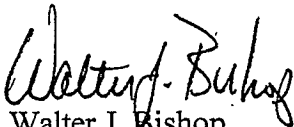
CCWD has developed a list of items that must be addressed by the CALFED Bay-Delta Program by the time of the Record of Decision (Attachment B). CALFED must address these items if it is to succeed in meeting its goals and objectives.

In 1988, the voter-constituents of CCWD approved a bond measure to finance the \$450 million Los Vaqueros Project. The Project was completed on time and on budget and is now in operation. The Los Vaqueros Project improves the water quality for CCWD's customers and also gives the region a much needed emergency supply of water. CALFED is currently considering the Los Vaqueros Reservoir site as a potential element of the preferred alternative. CCWD recognizes that if this watershed is used to support a larger reservoir, the new facility could offer considerable water quality and ecosystem benefits on a system-wide basis. However, CCWD will not consider or support a proposal involving the Los Vaqueros or Kellogg reservoir sites without assurances that protect CCWD's investment. These assurances are listed in Attachment C.

CCWD will continue to constructively participate in the development of a successful CALFED Bay-Delta Program. A detailed list of CCWD interests in the Bay-Delta and associated river systems that will guide CCWD's participation is given in Attachment D.

CCWD hopes the concerns and issues described within this letter will receive proper attention. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (925) 688-8034.

Sincerely,



Walter J. Bishop
General Manager

Attachments: (A) List of Water Quality Actions for Stage 1
(B) CCWD's Must-Have List for the Record of Decision
(C) Protection of CCWD's Interests Regarding the Los Vaqueros Project
(D) CCWD Interests in the Bay-Delta and Associated River Systems

cc: Steve Ritchie, CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Water Management Development Team

WJB/RAD/DAB

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bcc: Tom Linville
Greg Gartrell
Richard Denton
David Briggs
KT Shum
Al Donner